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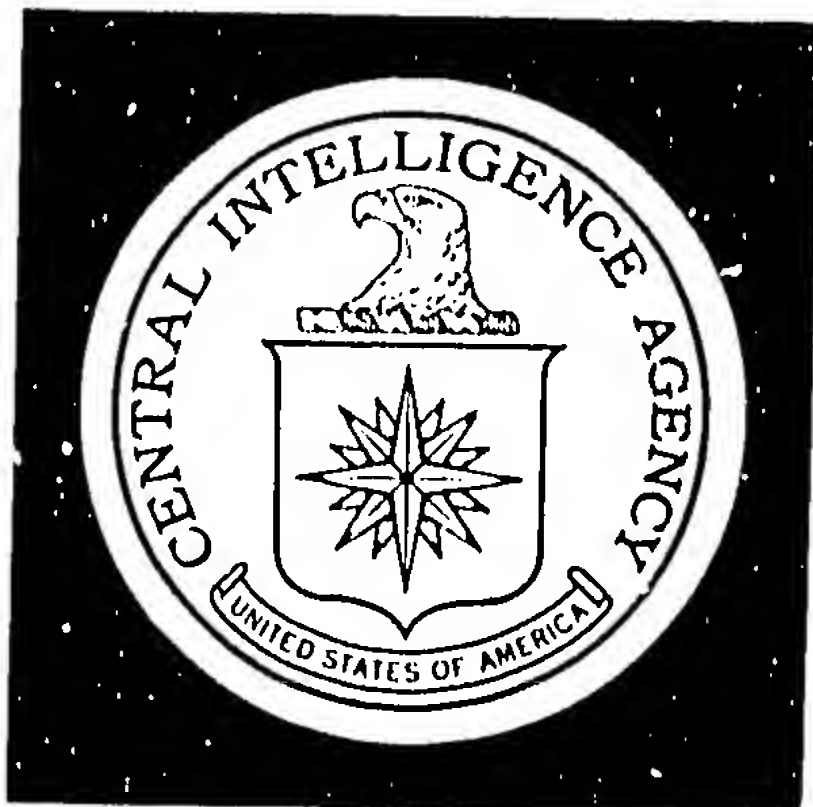
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DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

WEEKLY SUMMARY

Special Report

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Czechoslovakia Under Husak

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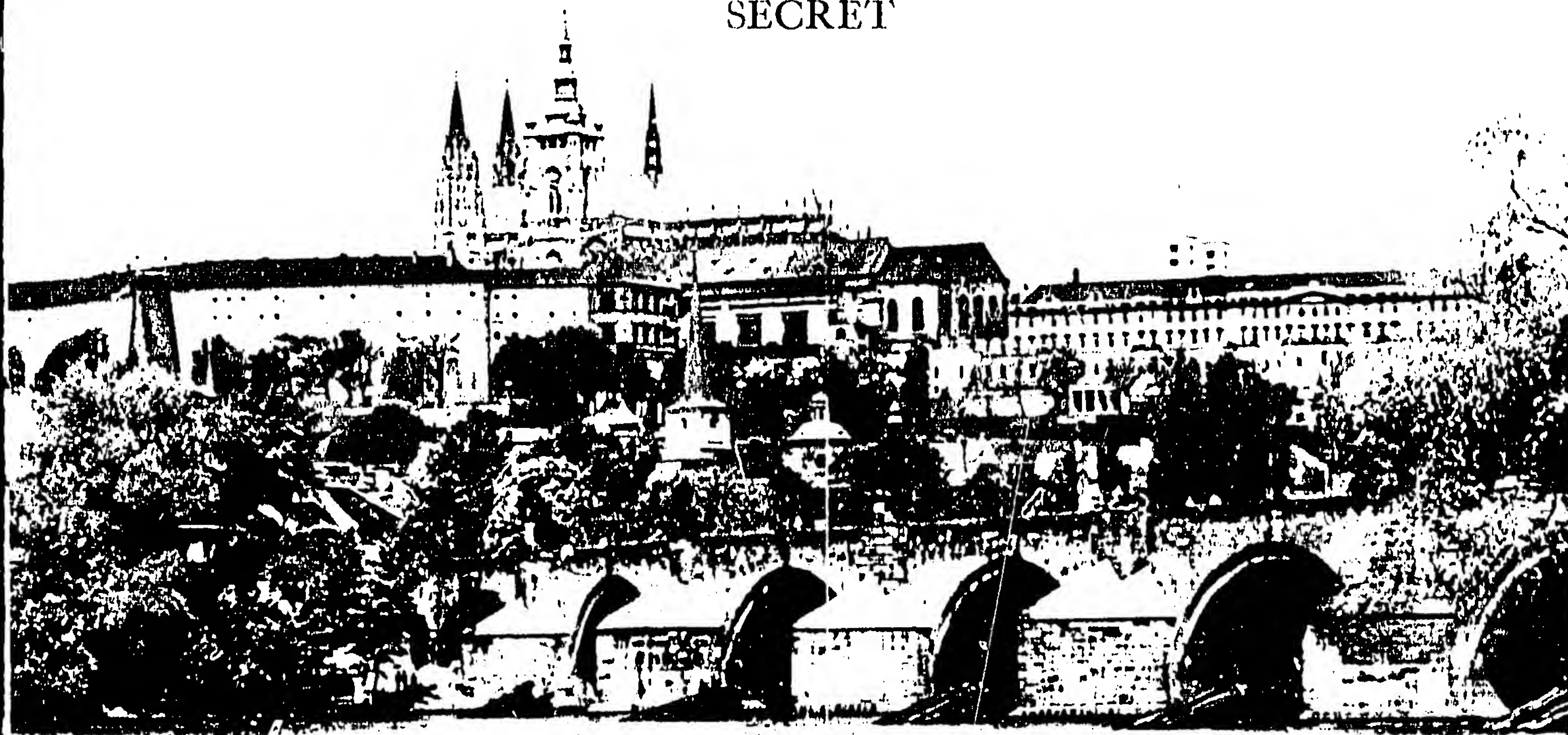
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CZECHOSLOVAKIA UNDER HUSAK

Party first secretary Gustav Husak is beginning to mold Czechoslovakia's institutions into instruments of his own power. He is not in full control yet, but since taking over from Dubcek last April, he has steadily asserted his position, most recently at last week's party central committee plenum, which approved sweeping leadership changes. At that meeting, Husak put his own man into the powerful post of Czech regional party chief. In the process, he engineered the transfer of his potential rival, Lubomir Strougal, to the job of federal premier, thus removing him from his party power base. Husak also indicated that he intends to satisfy Soviet demands while trying to avoid a full reversion to Stalinist practices.

Husak has been building up to this stage of affairs gradually. He succeeded in bringing relative stability to the leadership and imposed measures that produced a period of at least surface calm in the country. He accomplished this by forcing the party to adopt a "middle-of-the-road" political course similar to that instituted by Janos Kadar in Hungary after the 1956 revolt. In addition, he has once again thrown a veil of secrecy over policy making and politics and restored party and police control over society. Under Husak's leadership, virtually all of the demands made by the USSR since the invasion have been met. Czechoslovakia's image in the Communist camp has been refurbished, and a strong public endorsement has been won from the Soviet Union and most of the other invasion powers.

Husak's next task is to put down some deeper domestic political roots. Apparently encouraged by Soviet support, he now plans to complete "normalization" of domestic affairs and of relations with the Warsaw Pact governments this year. To do so, however, he and his colleagues must reckon with a number of political, economic and social problems that could delay this process. Husak will eventually have to assert his authority over conservatives in the leadership who will attempt to press him into more orthodox policies, as well as over the even more extreme conservatives who are seeking control of the regional party apparatuses in the Czech lands of Bohemia and Moravia. He must also quickly solve problems that could ultimately jeopardize the economy and with it, his position. Finally, his willingness to serve the Russians has widened the gulf between the party hierarchy and the population, and Husak is faced with popular alienation and passive antiregime dissidence, especially among students, workers, trade unionists, and intellectuals.

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HUSAK THE MAN

Gustav Husak has unquestionably put his stamp on the Czechoslovakia of today. A brilliant, dynamic, and sophisticated individual, Husak has been one of the most controversial figures in Czechoslovak politics for over 20 years. Less than 15 months after Dubcek replaced Novotny in January 1968, Husak became the first intellectual since Lenin to head a ruling European Communist party.

Husak was born 10 January 1913 to a Slovak peasant family in Dubravka, near Bratislava. Having earned a doctor of laws degree and subsequently joining the Communist party, he was in his 30s when he became head of the Slovak government. He had already gained the reputation of a brilliant political tactician who knew how to exploit the weaknesses of his adversaries.

Arrested and imprisoned by the Gestapo when World War II broke out, Husak was released almost immediately, reportedly through the intervention of Alexander Mach, then minister of interior in the Slovak regime that was collaborating with the Nazis. Husak was later accused of "red fascism" because of his friendship with members of the collaborationist regime and because he later intervened to help lighten Mach's postwar sentence for treason.

Husak played a key role in the Slovak national uprising in 1944 and, at the same time, developed a growing reputation as an ardent Slovak nationalist. [REDACTED] he and Laco Novomesky, another prominent Slovak politician and intellectual, traveled to Moscow in 1945 to propose to Soviet foreign minister Molotov that Slovakia become an independent state. As an inducement, Husak is said to have hinted that an autonomous Slovakia might ultimately be incorporated into the USSR, but



Gustav Husak
Party First Secretary

the Russians allegedly rejected the offer as premature. It is doubtful, however, that Husak was serious about a Soviet annexation of Slovakia.

Emerging in the postwar period as a major political figure, Husak was criticized for tolerating the excesses of the security police and for his severe repression of national minorities, particularly Hungarians living in Slovakia. Following the Communist coup in 1948, Husak became embroiled in the ensuing power struggle that led to Czechoslovakia's Stalinist era. Accused of "bourgeois nationalism," he was expelled from the party in 1951 and subsequently arrested. In April 1954, he and four others were tried on trumped up charges of treason, sabotage, and espionage, and Husak was sentenced to life imprisonment.

Released in 1960, Husak lived quietly, partly because Novotny was cognizant of his potential for sowing disunity within the party, and partly because Husak himself had no desire to serve the regime. Husak was officially rehabilitated and readmitted to the party in 1963, and for five years was employed as a "scientific" worker in the Slovak Academy of Sciences. In a recent speech, Husak said that he had turned down the post of deputy premier in 1964, in the wake of the disastrous economic recession of the year before.

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Although his stature within the Slovak regional party had grown remarkably, Husak apparently played only a minor role in the Slovak drive, spearheaded by Dubcek and Vasil Bilak, to remove Novotny from power during the final months of 1967. In fact, it was not until Brezhnev washed his hands of the affair, and the majority of the party leadership lined up against Novotny, that Husak offered his support to Dubcek in what he has described as a "Christmas letter."

HUSAK UNDER DUBCEK

In April 1968, three months after Dubcek replaced Novotny, Husak was named deputy premier in charge of "the great Slovak dream": federalization of the country. This plan was designed to give the Slovak minority greater rights and near-equality with the more populous Czechs by dividing the country into separate Czech and Slovak republics with their own distinct national governments drawn together under a minimal federal government apparatus in Prague.

In July 1968, a month before the Soviet invasion, Husak became embroiled in a heated dispute with his Czech colleagues over whether the Slovaks should be given parity on the federal level. Most Czechs believed that the principle of "majority rule" should apply on the federal level, and looked for the extraordinary party congress, then set for 9 September, to settle the argument. The Slovaks—and Husak—appeared headed for certain defeat on this issue, and the invasion oddly enough, benefited Husak by allowing him to preserve considerable leverage in asserting Slovak claims.

Husak's preoccupation with federalization also revealed that, as a result of his imprisonment during the 1950s, he had developed a more benign attitude toward the national minorities. A

bill granting greater rights to all minority groups, appended to the federalization legislation, was drafted during 1968 under Husak's guidance. In addition, he seemed to display a more tolerant attitude toward the religious communities during this period.

On other reforms of Dubcek, however, Husak from the beginning expressed reservations. Although he lauded the idea of "democratization," including fewer restrictions on the mass media, he criticized Dubcek's Action Program for generating "incorrect views." As Husak saw it, there were three main dangers: (a) that the liberal organizations might develop a nonsocialist philosophy that could attract a large popular following; (b) that among opinion makers "radicalized Philistines" could emerge who considered that the entire system under Novotny had been bad and must be changed and, (c) that there could be a resurgence of the dogmatists who wanted a simplistic return to rule by force.

HUSAK'S RISE TO POWER

Husak's resurgence as one of the country's most influential politicians began almost immediately after the invasion in August 1968. He was a member of President Ludvik Svoboda's delegation that went to Moscow to negotiate the release of Dubcek and the other leaders who had been taken prisoner. During the talks, Husak is said to have argued cogently and forcefully; he apparently impressed his Soviet counterparts who began a dialogue with him that has continued to the present.

Husak's increasing influence also prompted the "illegal 14th party congress," held clandestinely in a Prague factory on 22 August, to elect him to the presidium and central committee. Following his return to Czechoslovakia, Husak dominated the "extraordinary" Slovak party

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congress on 26-29 August and was elected Slovak party first secretary.

Shortly thereafter Husak delineated his policy of "realism" and became the foremost spokesman for "normalization"—broad compliance with Moscow—as the only possible course in the face of military occupation and the threat of a blood bath. Husak was the first Czechoslovak leader to characterize the Moscow Agreement of 26 August, the official catalog of Russian demands, as an "honorable solution." Significantly, he subsequently dissociated himself from the preinvasion leadership and criticized the results of Dubcek's reforms, particularly the uncontrolled mass media, the undisciplined party dissidents and unruly students. He also declared the 14th party congress invalid and called upon Dubcek and other leaders to do the same.

The motive for Husak's apparent transformation and his uncompromising support for "normalization" appears to have been a combination of pragmatism and opportunism. His stress on the bilateral character of the Moscow Agreement suggests that he expected that the Soviets would not make any significant concessions to Prague until after their demands had been met. In particular, Husak probably had been assured by the Soviets that he could go ahead with federalization. Some of Husak's comments also suggest that he believed that Soviet occupation forces eventually would be withdrawn.

Husak's strong leadership in the aftermath of the invasion—Dubcek appears to have relied heavily on him—and his dialogue with numerous Russian visitors led to widespread speculation as early as September 1968 that he was being groomed as Dubcek's successor. In the next three months, however, Husak restricted his activities to finishing work on the federalization bill, streamlining his own Slovak party leadership, and

tightening control over the Slovak people. At the same time, he became the central figure in an informal coalition of Slovaks and moderate as well as conservative Czechs within the central party apparatus who were disenchanted with Dubcek's ineffective and essentially anti-Soviet leadership. As a result, Husak's "group" and its ideas prevailed at the November 1968 party plenum that elected a new "centrist" leadership and adopted a "realist" political line, in effect isolating Dubcek.

After this, Husak came more and more into prominence and Dubcek faded into the background. Serious anti-Soviet riots in late March 1969 embroiled the Czechoslovak leadership in its most grave crisis after the invasion. The Russians apparently demanded that Dubcek be ousted and a new leadership formed that could exercise effective control of the population. There are indications that Moscow had threatened to bring additional troops into the country if the changes were not carried out.

Husak took advantage of the situation. He reportedly rallied the despairing leadership and allegedly was instrumental in constructing a new regime whose members were more acceptable to the Soviets. Husak was nominated for the post of party chief by Dubcek after the latter agreed to step aside, and, on 17 April 1969, he received an overwhelming majority of central committee votes. Moscow's role, or lack of it, in Husak's ascendancy is still unclear. It seems most likely that the Soviets gave tentative approval, since they probably considered Husak the strongest leader in Prague and because they undoubtedly had determined that his alleged Slovak "nationalism" and his authoritarianism could work to their advantage. The Russians probably also realized that, if necessary, the uncharismatic Husak would be much easier to replace than Dubcek.

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HUSAK'S POLICIES

"If...Novotny managed everything, including the economy, bureaucratically, Dubcek did not manage at all."

Prague Radio, 3 January 1970

Since Husak took over, he has sought to avoid the divergent excesses of the Novotny and Dubcek regimes. Most of the leadership's policies, in fact, have reflected Husak's preoccupation with "normalization" and in effect are less bloody but just as repressive as those employed by Novotny, if not more so. Husak's policies thus far are directed toward four basic goals: 1) to unify the party and restore its "leading role"; 2) to establish and maintain an effective system of control over the populace and all social organizations; 3) to remove the disruptive influence of "anti-socialists," i. e., the liberals and moderates who have played an influential role since the Dubcek period; and 4) to regain the confidence of the leaders of the invasion powers and other socialist allies.

Husak does seem intent on preventing a return to the pre-January 1968 political setting, but

his role in each policy formulation is difficult to evaluate. Many of his immediate goals are identical with those of the ultraconservatives who are putting pressure on him. Further, Husak's responses to various pressures suggest that he is guided more by pragmatism than by principle. His actions to date have been reflexive, designed to stabilize his own position and to reassure the Soviets that he can control the situation and cope with domestic problems.

THE PURGE

In the short time he has been in office, Husak has initiated extensive personnel changes at all levels of the party, government, and social and economic organizations. The first phase of the purge installed "realists" sympathetic with Husak's concepts in place of the liberals and moderates associated with Dubcek. The conservatives were largely untouched because of their rapport with the Soviets. Since April 1969, some organizations have been reshuffled a second time, for the most part because the regime was dissatisfied with officials who were dragging their feet in implementing leadership directives. During the party plenum last week, several prominent leaders were ousted from the party presidium, which

CZECHOSLOVAK COMMUNIST PARTY (KSC) (as of 28 January 1970)				
First Secretary	Secretaries	Other Members of the Secretariat	Members of the Presidium	Candidate Members of the Presidium
Gustav Husak (S)	Vasil Bilak (S) Jan Fojtik Alois Indra Frantisek Penc	<u>Antonin Klapal</u>	Vasil Bilak (S) Peter Colotka (S) Evzen Erban Gustav Husak (S) <u>Antonin Klapal</u> Josef Kempny <u>Jan Konecny</u> Josef Lenart (S) Jan Piller Lubomir Strougal Ludvik Svoboda (Honorary)	Frantisek Barbirek Eduard Benes (S) Vaclav Fiala <u>Alois Indra</u>
<p>— Leaders who subscribe to an essentially more orthodox political philosophy than Husak</p>		(S) Slovak		

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indicates that even those holdovers from the Dubcek era who had fallen in line with Husak's "realism" are no longer acceptable.

Under an elaborate party card exchange program now under way, district party officials are screening local party functionaries, and party central committee commissions are investigating the rank and file. Husak has declared that all party members must support his policies or get out. Last week's plenum set up a 12-member commission, dominated by prominent pro-Soviet conservatives, to oversee the program. This suggests that the regime will comply with the Soviet request that the Czechoslovak Communist party be substantially reduced.

Husak is purging "antisocialists" by removing them from their jobs and expelling them from the party. Up to now, the party leader has, however, been willing to give virtually all dissidents one last chance to fall in line before facing censure. Despite conservative pressure, Husak has continually stressed—most recently on 29 January at the party plenum—that there will be no "show trials." A few outspoken intellectuals, such as national chess champion Ludek Pachman and television commentator Vladimir Skutina, have been arrested, but most of the prominent progressives still in the country have not. Dubcek, for example, was recently assigned as Czechoslovak ambassador to Turkey. Other key liberals, such as former National Assembly president Josef Smrkovsky, are still free, although he and others in similar straits have had an extremely difficult time finding suitable employment.

POPULATION CONTROL

Party leader Husak has firmly curbed public displays of antiregime or anti-Soviet sentiment. When threatened with potential disturbances, the authorities have put the security police on alert,

PARTY FIRST SECRETARY HUSAKON HIS ROLE AS DEPUTY PREMIER UNDER DUBCEK

"Last August I was deputy premier...I knew absolutely nothing about things....Gradually, bit by bit, one got to know of various things, and for the first time my eyes were opened a little when in October we were in the Soviet Union for a conference—Dubcek, Cernik and I—and when during his several-hour speech Comrade Brezhnev began to recapitulate the entire story. This lasted for several hours, and...Dubcek could not even say boo. That is when my eyes were opened. I say that the whole affair was not fair play." They (the Russians) now hold against me the fact that at the Slovak congress (28-29 August 1968), I backed Dubcek when I said: 'If Dubcek falls I will go to.' Yes, it is true, I said so, under the circumstances I knew at that time....And this is how it is with all of us here, I think."

(25 September 1969)

ON REFORM

"The basic concept of post-January policy remains even today the starting point for forming the party program even though it must be theoretically extended, corrected slightly in many aspects, and made more concrete and gradually implemented."

(25 September 1969)

ON REPRESSIVE POLICIES

"We...regard all the temporary measures, unavoidable for restoring order, and strengthening state power, for putting a stop to economic disintegration and primarily for restoring the unity and action capacity of the party, as an unavoidable precondition for being able in the future to implement these positive tasks which could not be realized after January 1968..."

(25 September 1969)

ON WORKING WITH PEOPLE

"Real sensitivity is needed for work with the people. We are not butchers. Our party is not a slaughterhouse. This is work involving living people—sensitive people—where mind and feelings play a role...The policy of the Communist Party is not carried out by the sword. Education is not a question of slashing, not a question of revenge...not a question of a personal settling of accounts."

(25 September 1969)

ON PARTY PURGE

"The Communist Party is a voluntary association of people thinking the same way. He who does not think the same way need not be in the party. And he who wants to fight it cannot be in it....Dead souls in the party are of no use to us; however, even less so are souls who are hostile to the party....This is not a raid on party members....We do not want to lose even one single honest party member."

(5 January 1970)

ON SHOW TRIALS

"...there are no forces either in the party leadership or in the central committee that would be striving for a return to the fifties, for distortion and violation of laws. Our party will not degrade itself to framing show trials..."

(29 January 1969)

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reinforced them with additional security forces and military units, and made thousands of preventive arrests. When large-scale demonstrations occurred throughout the country on 21 August 1969, the first anniversary of the invasion, the security forces were able to maintain control with tear gas, water hoses, truncheons and a strong show of military force. No Soviets were involved in putting down the demonstrations.

In the aftermath of the demonstrations, the government announced that people arrested for "opposition" in the future will face severe punishment and loss of civil rights. A legal punishment rarely used since the early 1950s was revived: "prohibition of residence." This measure calls for banishment from one to five years for a wide range of offenses, and could again become a common alternative to imprisonment.

Husak has restricted travel in and out of the country in an attempt to curtail Western influences, to close the escape hatch for dissidents, and to minimize the number of defections of badly needed scientific and technical personnel. The flow of traffic from the West into Czechoslovakia has been reduced, the number of Western news correspondents in Prague restricted, Western broadcasts jammed, and the sale of many Western newspapers and periodicals prohibited. Dubcek's numerous legal guarantees of due process and individual rights undoubtedly will be ignored, inasmuch as the wide-ranging powers of public prosecutors have been restored.

As a result, the public has been cowed. Husak, consequently, has lost the support of many who originally considered him preferable to any other but Dubcek. This change in attitude is responsible for passive resistance in the form of worker slowdowns, absenteeism and sabotage.

CULTURE AND EDUCATION

Cultural policy has become increasingly repressive, suggesting that Husak has no qualms about going even further than Novotny in attempting to corral the recalcitrant intellectuals. He has stifled the mass media by restoring censorship, abolished the more outspoken progressive publications, and ousted prominent journalists, editors, commentators, and media administrators. In addition, party committees headed by arch-conservatives have been set up to police the mass media. Husak has promised that censorship eventually will be abolished, but this is unlikely until the presence of censors in the editorial offices is superfluous.

The regime now exercises strict control over the cultural community by dealing directly with individual dissident intellectuals, rather than through their unions. Some unrepentant progressives have had their passports withdrawn. The government has been empowered to exercise greater control over the unions themselves by closely supervising their funds and restricting their publishing activities and contacts with Western counterparts.

Dissenting unions are being threatened with expulsion from the source of their organizational strength and finances, the Communist-controlled National Front. Organizations dropped from the front are considered illegal and are automatically disbanded. In early January 1970, the front rescinded the membership of the motion picture and television artists' association and warned five other cultural unions to change their attitudes or face a similar fate. To fill the vacuum created by the dismissal of many progressive writers, the Czech and Slovak ministries of culture intend to organize "groups" of reliable writers.

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Strict state control of education was re-imposed on 1 January 1970. In a complete reversal of policy, the Czech and Slovak ministers of education have been empowered to appoint and recall academic administrators and professors, and to create, abolish, or reorganize educational and scientific institutions. Political reliability has again become a prerequisite in the hiring of teachers and in the admission of students to the universities. Disciplinary commissions are being set up to deal with student radicals, and political indoctrination, beginning this month, will be intensified within the academic community.

The situation appears to be less repressive in Slovakia than in the Czech lands, where so-called "antisocialism" is more deeply rooted and where an orthodox minister of education is determined to stifle all student activity outside the classroom. He probably is attempting to prevent the students from organizing any mass demonstrations such as those that developed in late April 1969, when 20,000 students in 20 universities protested the ouster of Dubcek. The minister has also ordered all student and faculty publications discontinued until they can be evaluated and then reissued individually on a probationary basis.

FEDERALIZATION

Now that Husak has moved to Prague, his enthusiasm for federalization of all national organizations has diminished. Federalization of the government, when introduced on 1 January 1969, was incomplete and confused, and the program now poses both short and long-term problems. After one year of federalization, there still has been an inadequate delineation of responsibility and of chains of command. The system has revealed a shortage of qualified Slovak officials for federal posts, as well as an inadequate organizational arrangement in the Czech lands. To complicate matters, the Czechs and Slovaks are

implementing federalization at different speeds, at a time when tandem cooperation between the two groups is vital. Consequently, federalization has strained relations between the two nationalities. To eliminate one problem, the regime last week abolished the federal post of "state secretary," removing a bureaucratic level that had been created to give the minority Slovaks equal representation in the Czechoslovak cabinet.

Husak also has had second thoughts on federalizing the party. Such a federative arrangement—previously planned for next year—would strengthen the Czech and Slovak regional parties. In all likelihood it would enable the numerically stronger Czech party bureau to dominate federal party meetings, including the next party congress. The party leader is well aware that such a development would allow the politician who runs the Czech party to increase his power, and to isolate Husak from his own power base in Slovakia. To prevent this, Husak told the party plenum last week that he plans to recentralize party authority in Prague. He explained his retreat on this issue by emphasizing that national rivalries already had impeded policy making and had blocked implementation of the few decisions reached. Husak may also have been responding to Soviet complaints that federalization of the party would have a divisive effect on the leadership.

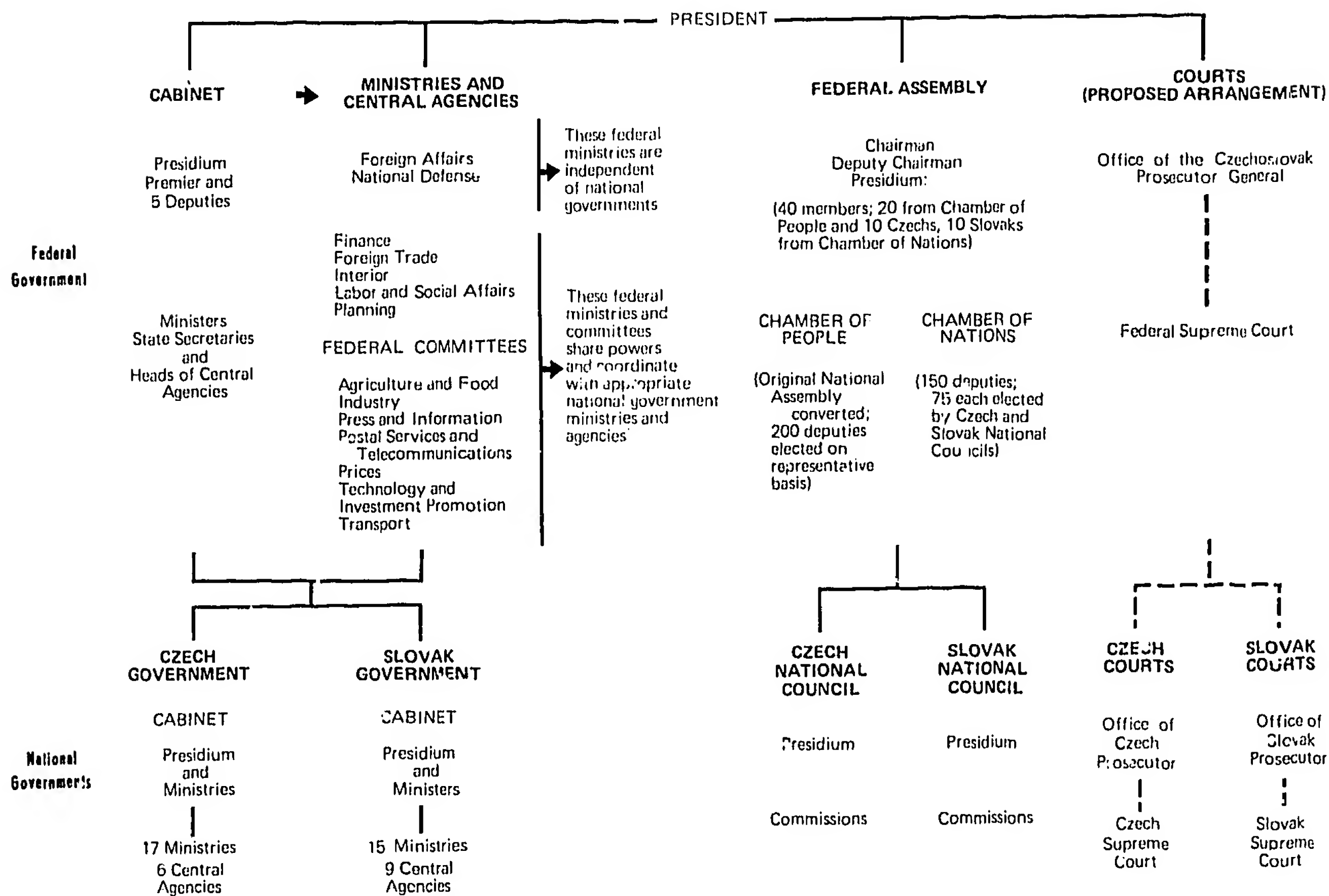
REHABILITATION

The program to rehabilitate former political prisoners who suffered unjustly during the 1950s, a reform that Husak originally endorsed wholeheartedly, is still in progress, but its pace has become monumentally slow. A central committee "white paper" justifying the program was produced under the direction of presidium member Jan Piller. It has been shelved, undoubtedly because it implicates both the Soviets and prominent Czechoslovak conservatives. Dissenting dogmatists, moreover, have caused the removal of

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Federative Arrangement of Czechoslovak Government (introduced 1 January 1969)



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some judges for allegedly exonerating individuals guilty of treason.

Some security officials have attempted to intimidate applicants for rehabilitation by subjecting them to intense personal investigations and by interviewing many of them in the same room in which they were brutally interrogated in the early 1950s. Prior to his recent removal, former Czech party chief Strougal, who served as interior minister under Novotny, blocked a Czech government bill regulating rehabilitation, and, late

in 1969, public prosecutors appeared to have begun a concerted campaign to limit the number of acquittals.

THE ECONOMY

The overriding priority of political issues since Husak became party chief last April caused decisions on several major economic matters to be postponed. A party plenum that would address the economy was postponed from October 1969 until last week. This session originally was slated

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to deal almost exclusively with the nation's serious economic difficulties, but the agenda was expanded to include many political questions.

Husak faces formidable economic problems. He must try to stabilize and give direction to the economy and oversee increased efforts to restore work discipline. During the past two years the Czechoslovak workers received sizable wage increases despite their failure to increase productivity. The resultant pressure on consumer goods supplies was a major factor in increased inflation.

In 1970 the Husak government will continue a restrictive, anti-inflationary policy, characterized by the Czechoslovaks as economic "consolidation." Anti-inflationary measures introduced earlier include stringent controls on wages and prices. Having failed to get a large Soviet loan, the government now plays down the importance of external aid, claiming that better use of available economic resources must provide the means for overcoming serious problems. Alarmed at the waste of resources in capital construction, central authorities are determined to concentrate in 1970 on priority projects and to retain tighter control over investment funds than they did in 1969. Central control of the economy will be strengthened, as will supervision of plan implementation.

The government will rely increasingly on administrative measures to tackle the serious problem of sagging labor productivity. On 1 January the government amended the labor code to provide strict penalties for absenteeism, loafing, and violation of wage regulations. An amended penal code provides for more rapid prosecution for misdemeanors such as theft of property and currency speculation. It seems certain that most of the economic reforms discussed in the Dubcek era will not be carried out, although enterprises

may continue to have some small freedoms obtained since January 1968.

THE CONSERVATIVE CHALLENGE

Husak's "normalization" drive has inadvertently played into the hands of prominent conservatives within the party and considerably strengthened the conservative group as an influential pressure bloc.

On the surface, the chaotic power struggle between factions that has characterized Czechoslovak party politics in recent years appears to be over. Husak has virtually wiped out the vast web of recalcitrant progressives as an effective opposition. The most prominent hard liners, mindful of Soviet support for Husak, have found it expedient to fall into line. What is left of open "opposition" to Husak would seem to be a lightweight contingent of conservative extremists, who do not enjoy overt Soviet support, seeking to influence Husak's "realist" policies, which thus far have been acceptable to Moscow. Much more important is the growing opposition composed of Novotny's followers. They are particularly effective in the provinces, in the military, and at secondary levels in the party apparatus in Prague. On the surface they support Husak, but they also appear to be playing a waiting game, building positions of power and preventing Husak from too much moderation. They probably are encouraged by developments at last week's party plenum. Three prominent conservatives who served under Novotny replaced three moderates on the presidium, which suggests that Husak may no longer enjoy a decisive majority on the party's ruling body.

Husak's present strength is largely attributable to Soviet support. If the Soviets were to withdraw their endorsement, the conservative

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Alois Indra
Conservative Leader

roup near the top probably would be available to Moscow as an alternative leadership. Perhaps the most influential of these conservatives is Alois Indra, who now serves as party secretary in charge of personnel appointments to the top levels of the government, and social organizations. Indra, one of the few leaders said to have been forewarned of the Soviet invasion, was Moscow's first choice to head a "collaborationist" regime. Despite his recent open support for Husak, Indra has engineered the elevation of a number of like-minded conservatives into the federal government apparatus. He probably still is Moscow's candidate for party leader if Husak should falter badly. At last week's party plenum, Indra was elevated



Josef Kempny
Regional Party Boss

to alternate membership on the party's ruling presidium, a post in which he can more effectively breathe down Husak's neck.

Another prominent conservative, Vasil Bilak, is presently a presidium member and party secretary in charge of foreign affairs. An adversary of Husak, Bilak has maneuvered his way back into the Slovak party central committee from which he was expelled as an alleged "collaborator" shortly after the invasion.

Bilak is working behind the scenes in Slovakia to strengthen his own position at Husak's expense. Since Husak's colleagues control party machinery in Bratislava, Bilak's efforts are



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Vasil Bilak
One Husak Adversary

likely to be long and arduous. Nevertheless, Bilak is said to have had some success.

Power-seeking conservatives presently attempting to establish a power base in the party apparatus of the Czech lands of Bohemia and Moravia may run afoul of their new overlord, Josef Kempny. As first secretary of the powerful Czech party bureau, Kempny has in effect become the number two man in the Czechoslovak Communist party. Kempny is known to hold dogmatic views on some issues, but he has no popular following and owes his present stature to Husak,

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SOVIET SUPPORT FOR HUSAK

"Comrade Husak...(is) an outstanding political figure, a loyal son of his people...a man of great courage."

Brezhnev Speech, 27 October 1969

POLISH PRESS ON GOMULKA AND HUSAK

"(They are) two Communists whose biographies are strikingly resembling, who have made great contributions to the present historic shape of Poland and Czechoslovakia ...men of unflinching principle..."

Glos Pracy, 26 May 1969

HUNGARIAN MEDIA ON HUSAK

"...The Czechoslovak party has a leader who has proved by his views and activity so far that he is able and ready to solve the grave problems of Czechoslovak society."

Radio Budapest, 18 April 1969

whom he probably will support. Moreover, Kempny probably will not be as vulnerable to the pressures of conservative extremists as his predecessor, Strougal. This fact could be crucial to Husak's power in the future because Kempny, as Czech party chief, now is in a position to control the majority of delegates to the next party congress. If the Czechoslovak party ever is federalized, a Czech bloc could dominate the central party apparatus in Prague.

The conservatives, who now control the key portfolios in the party secretariat, also have created political and social mass organizations that have potential use as a threat to Husak. Such groups include a social-political mass organization, the Left Front, and ideologically approved youth and cultural associations. In addition, the hard liners have gained virtual control of the police and security apparatus. The conservatives as a group, however, do not appear to be unified on a common political philosophy, and there have

been reports of conflicts among their key leaders, especially over the question of pro-Soviet orientation. This could prevent them from becoming an effective coalition in the immediate future.

FOREIGN POLICY

Czechoslovak foreign policy is the exclusive domain of the archconservatives. Husak seems to stay out of it. Bilak serves as party secretary for relations with other parties, and Pavel Auersperg, a dogmatist who formerly served under Novotny, heads the party central committee's department for foreign affairs, which controls the Foreign Ministry. Indra, the party secretary for personnel assignments in the government, has in part been responsible for a purge in the Foreign Ministry as well as for the recall of liberal and moderate ambassadors who aligned themselves with Dubcek's policies and decried the Soviet invasion. Foreign Minister Jan Marko is a moderate, but he has no influence in policy matters.

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Czechoslovak foreign policy under Husak largely reflects the goals of Moscow. Prague's "initiatives" have primarily been confined to a successful campaign to improve relations with the invasion powers. Under Husak, the Czechoslovaks have parroted Warsaw Pact statements on disarmament, European security and East-West detente, most recently supporting the SALT talks in Helsinki.

Husak personally has long been suspicious of the motives of the West in general and the US in particular. Czechoslovakia, under his leadership, probably will take only small steps, after consultation with Moscow, toward improving bilateral relations with the West. In one of his rare foreign policy statements, Husak in December indicated that Prague hoped to expand trade with the West Germans, but he made all the old demands on Bonn, including renunciation of the Munich agreement from the beginning, before any further rapprochement could become a reality.

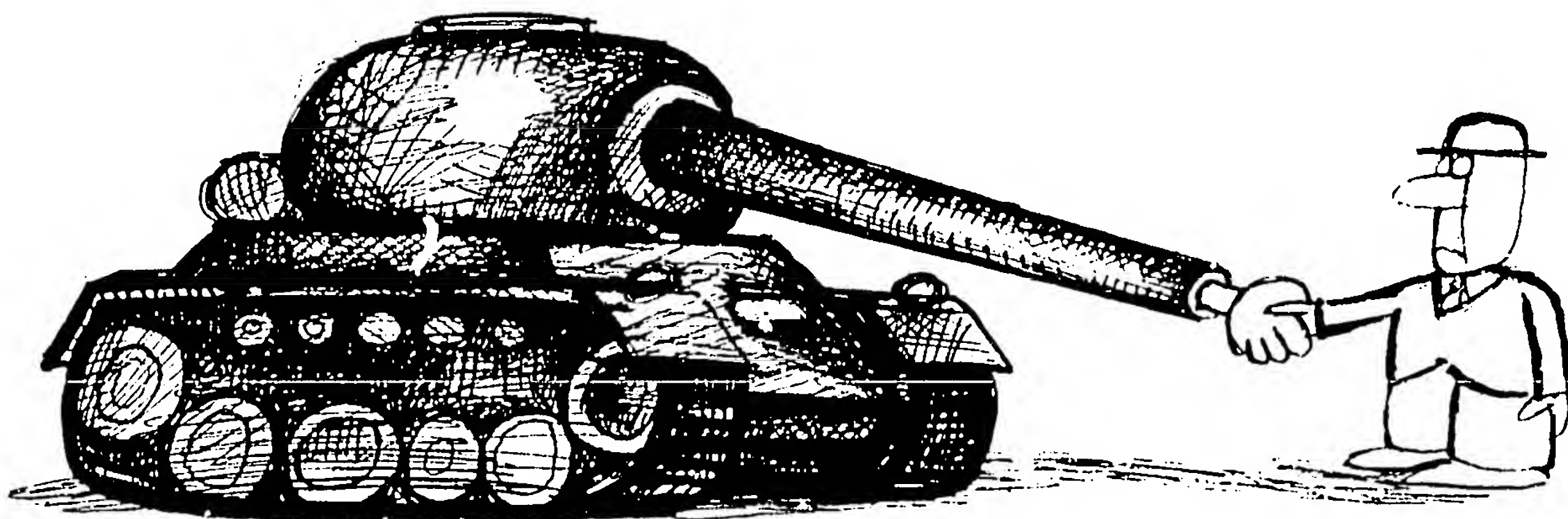
RELATIONS WITH SOCIALIST ALLIES

The Soviets, initially wary of Husak, ultimately gave him their full official endorsement

when he and other top Czechoslovak leaders visited Moscow in October. The turning point in the Prague party leader's relations with the Russians appears to have been his blunt suppression of the nationwide demonstrations on the first anniversary of the Soviet invasion. Conservative leader Indra spent most of August in the USSR, probably discussing contingency plans with the Soviets in the event that the anniversary demonstrations got out of hand. After the anniversary passed without significant incidents, Indra publicly offered his support for Husak's politics. Shortly thereafter, the Soviets underlined their endorsement by awarding Husak the medal of "Hero of the Soviet Union."

Czechoslovakia's relations with the other invaders have improved, but in varying degrees. Hungary and Poland have gone out of their way to demonstrate their preference for the Husak leadership over a more orthodox regime. Both the Hungarians and the Poles have expressed concern that Czechoslovakia not return to a Stalinist system of rule, undoubtedly worried about the spillover effect in their countries. In December, after Kadar visited Prague to assess the situation for himself, the Husak regime for the first time

Popular Czechoslovak View of "Normalization" of Relations with Soviet Union



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stated explicitly that it had studied the Hungarian "solution" in the aftermath of the 1956 uprising and would adopt those measures applicable to Czechoslovakia.

The East Germans were less than enthusiastic about Husak's election, for they doubtless hoped that one of the archconservatives who was lobbying for more orthodox policies would replace Dubcek. Gradually, however, Pankow has come around to offering Husak a qualified approval. Relations are still cool, however, as they are with Bulgaria.

Czechoslovakia's relations with Romania and Yugoslavia have improved only slightly since the invasion. Leaders of both countries have given verbal support to Husak's efforts to forge a stable leadership and to bring domestic calm to the country. Both were committed to Dubcek, however. Husak, in turn, coldly reciprocated by advocating increased cooperation with these two, but only within the framework of the Warsaw Pact and CEMA.

OUTLOOK

Czechoslovakia's present leaders can count on Soviet support for the immediate future. As long as Czechoslovakia continues toward orthodoxy, Husak will probably be their man in Prague. If, however, it should look as if he were losing control, the Soviets would probably forsake him for Indra and even more orthodox policies.

In the longer run, however, Soviet support will not by itself be enough to sustain him in power. Husak will need to do more than maintain control over the restless population and a disenchanted party. At a minimum, he will have to introduce positive programs designed to improve the standard of living and to overcome worker

apathy or passive resistance. He will have to win back the intellectuals and the young on terms they are reluctant to accept. Since he has chosen to follow Kadar as a model, the outlook for a significant lifting of the repressive aspects of his policies is long term and gradual. It has taken Kadar more than a decade to achieve a minimal reconciliation with his people; it may take Husak at least as long.

The Czechoslovaks clearly expect to complete "normalization" of the domestic situation and of relations with the Soviet Union during 1970. This in essence would mean the purchase of Soviet trust, and probably is an optimistic estimate. Husak has indicated that Prague and Moscow will renew their bilateral friendship treaty on 9 May, the 25th anniversary of the Soviet liberation. The pact, according to Husak, will reflect the "new contemporary situation and the higher degree of mutual collaboration." A long period of a satellite relationship, at least in foreign policy and economic matters, thus seems to be envisaged. During the year, the regime must find solutions to its immediate political and economic problems in order to demonstrate to the Soviets that it can continue to provide strong effective leadership and extend the domestic calm over a longer period of time.

First among these problems is Husak's need to strengthen his control over the party leadership. Husak or his rivals, therefore, can be expected to engineer relatively significant changes in the party and government leadership as they jockey for power. Every leader is vulnerable to attack from one side or the other. For example, Husak's decision last week to retain the instruments of power in the central apparatus in Prague—at the expense of federalization—may alienate some of his supporters in his native Slovakia. The difficulty will be to effect such changes without seriously disturbing domestic

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tranquility. Husak's second political problem will be to gain responsiveness from lower levels. This will be a long term affair.

During the plenum last week, the party central committee streamlined the federal government apparatus in an effort to cope with its economic problems. Five ministers and one deputy premier with expertise in economic and technical fields were included in a revamped cabinet. Nevertheless, prospects for significant stabilization of the economy in 1970 are not good. The leadership admits that meat supplies for the population will remain inadequate at least until fall, and it is unlikely that supplies of other consumer goods can be increased adequately. Nevertheless, some improvement can be expected if the regime succeeds in enforcing its ceiling on wage increases and if investment construction outside housing is kept at the low level planned. Longer range attempts to make Czechoslovak industry efficient will be sacrificed for the immediate goal of a resumption in industrial growth rates, particularly in producer goods branches. The government now is more closely linking prospects for improvements in worker's living conditions to increased productivity. The leadership hopes that incentives combined with increased discipline will be adequate to produce the desired results. In foreign trade, Czechoslovakia will become increasingly dependent on the USSR and, as a result, will lessen its ties with the non-Communist countries.

In 1971, the regime plans to cap the normalization drive by holding a party congress and, afterwards, national elections. Regime officials are hoping that if they can successfully carry these off, the Soviets will allow them more freedom in conducting their own affairs.

For the longer run, Husak has promised relaxation. He has characterized the repressive policies he has imposed on society as "temporary," but, at the same time, some of them have been given the force of law. In the next few years, Husak will continue to proceed cautiously, and the rigid controls he has imposed probably will remain in effect indefinitely. In the last analysis, a loosening or tightening of controls in Prague may be determined by such external influences as a change in leadership in Moscow or detente between East and West.

The Soviets, for their part, will concentrate on consolidating their hold on Czechoslovakia. Eventually they may be willing to grant Husak a longer leash. For example, the Soviets have approved, at least pro forma, Husak's plan eventually to introduce the "positive program of January 1968." The Czechoslovaks hope that this means that some limited reforms may gradually be implemented. Potential Czechoslovak reforms, like those introduced in Hungary in the years following the 1956 uprising, probably will have to be, at least initially, confined to improving the standard of living and the "quality of life" without jeopardizing the party's monopoly of leadership.

Some Prague officials are still hopeful that the Soviets will eventually demonstrate their support of Husak by making at least a token withdrawal of occupation troops and granting a substantial hard currency loan. The USSR, however, is not likely to remove any troops as long as it considers the Czechoslovak armed forces to be unreliable. A hard currency loan at present is equally out of the question, as long as the standard of living in Prague is higher than in Moscow.

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